The Certainty of a Future Judgment *considered and improved.*

A

SERMON

On occasion of the

DEATH

OF

Mr. James Cooper,

WHO

Departed this Life, *Nov.* 24. 1748.

In the Sixty-second Year of his Age,

PREACHED at

KINGSTON upon *Thames*,

November 27th. 1748.

By GEORGE WIGHTWICK, *M.A.*

Published at the Request of the Relations of the deceased and of others.

——*It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.* Heb. ix. 27.

We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. 2 Cor. v. 10.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

ACTS xvii. 31.

Becauſe he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs, by that man, whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given aſſurance unto all men, in that he hath raiſed him from the dead.

NO man that exerciſeth his *reaſon*, and conſidereth as he ought, either GOD, *himſelf*, or the *world* about him, can think, that this life is his *final ſtate*, but muſt conclude, that there is *another life* after this, in which all men ſhall be *rewarded* or *puniſhed according to their works*.

THE doctrine of a *future judgment*, to commence immediately after death; or that all men will then receive a *private ſentence*, which will be *publickly ratified* at the judgment of the great day, is one of the moſt *awful* and *awakening truths* in all the word of GOD; and if ſeriouſly conſidered, would

(by the divine bleſſing) have a *mighty influence* on our hearts and lives. This is the *foundation* on which the *whole ſuperſtructure* of *practical religion* is raiſed; [a] *For he that cometh unto GOD, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him*——Take away the belief of a *judgment to come*, and the rewards and puniſhments of a future ſtate, and a *door* is opened to all manner of *licentiouſneſs* and *wickedneſs*.

THIS *important* and *intereſting truth*, has kept the world in *ſome awe* of the *ſupreme Being* in all ages. And all the religion, that has ever been among mankind, owes its *original*, in a great meaſure, to the *belief* of it. And the apoſtle ſuggeſts this *awful conſideration*, as the moſt *likely expedient*, to reclaim men from their ſins, and awaken them to repentance, and a holy life, in the words of my text, which our *deceaſed friend* deſired might be the *ſubject* of your ſerious meditation on this *ſolemn occaſion*; *Becauſe he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs, by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given aſſurance unto all men, in that he hath raiſed him from the dead.*

THESE words are part of St. *Paul*'s excellent ſermon to the learned *Athenians*, which begins at *ver.* 22. It was preached in the *Forum* called *Areopagus*, which ſtood upon *Mars*

[a] Heb. xi. 6.

Mars hill; and was the higheſt *Forum* in *Athens*; which was at that time the ſeat of learning in *Greece*, the chief reſort of the *Philoſophers* of all *ſects*, and of the ableſt and moſt accompliſhed men, in every part of literature. The *judges* who ſat in this court (of whom *Dionyſius* was one, *ver.* 34.) were, from the court were they ſat, called *Areopagites*. They where the *Athenian ſenate*, or ſtanding *court* of *judicature*. St. *Paul* ſtanding on *Mars hill*, in the midſt of the *Forum*, among the *elders* and *ſenators*, preached *concerning Jeſus and the reſurrection* to a numerous auditory of *Epicurean* and *Stoick* philoſophers.

The *Epicureans* taught, that the world was not made by God, but by a *fortuitous concourſe* of atoms; that *providence* did *not intereſt* itſelf in *human affairs*; that *ſenſual pleaſure* was the *chief good*, or *ſupreme happineſs* of man; and that we are not to expect a reſurrection of the dead, or any puniſhments after death.

The *Stoicks* held the world to be a God; that *matter* was *eternal*, and God *corporeal*; and that God was either the ſoul of the world, or the world itſelf a God. That all things were ſubject to an *irreſiſtible fatality*; that *virtue* was its own *ſufficient reward*, and *vice* its own *ſufficient puniſhment*. They aſſerted the *conflagration* and *renovation* of the world, and had ſome expectation of a *future ſtate*;

ſtate; but fluctuated much, as to their belief of the rewards and puniſhments of it. And taught, that though *ſouls* might live *long*, yet not *always*, in a future ſtate.

THE apoſtle having ſhewn them, that the *unknown* GOD, whom they were *ignorant* of, though they pretended to worſhip him, was the only *proper object* of their *religious worſhip*; and that he was *commiſſioned* and *ſent* by him, to inſtruct them, how they might worſhip him with *acceptance*; and reproved them for their *groſs ſuperſtition* and *idolatry*, in his *admirable addreſs* to them, which begins at *ver.* 22. *Ye men of Athens, I perceive that ye are too ſuperſtitious: For as I paſſed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inſcription, to the Unknown* GOD; *whom therefore ye ignorantly worſhip; him declare I unto you.* GOD *that made the world, and all things therein, ſeeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, as tho' he needed any thing, ſeeing he giveth to all, life and breath, and all things, and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation: That they ſhould ſeek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, tho' he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain alſo of your own poets have ſaid, for we are alſo his*

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off-ſpring. Foraſmuch then as we are the off-ſpring of GOD, *we ought not ſo think, that the Godhead is like unto gold, or ſilver, or ſtone graven by art, and man's device.* I ſay, the apoſtle having *reproved* them, for the *groſs ſuperſtition* and *idolatry* of their worſhip, he acquaints them, that GOD *now called them to repentance*, for their *ſuperſtitious* and *idolatrous rites*, and all other *indignities* and *affronts*, they had offered to his *ſacred Majeſty. Ver.* 30. *The times of this ignorance* GOD[b] *winked at, or overlooked, but now commandeth all men every where to repent.* *q. d.* "Tho' a merciful GOD has ſo far *overlooked* theſe ages of *ignorance* and *error*, "as that he hath not puniſhed the *deluded* "*nations*, as their *manifold* and *heinous provocations* have moſt juſtly deſerved, yet out "of the freedom and riches of his grace "having made ſo *clear* a *revelation* of his "will in his *glorious goſpel*, he *now commandeth all men, every where to repent*, of their "*ſuperſtition, idolatry*, and *wickedneſs, becauſe* "*he hath appointed a day, in the which he* "*will judge the world in righteouſneſs, by that* "*man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath* "*given aſſurance unto all men, in that he hath* "*raiſed him from the dead.*"

In diſcourſing on the words, I ſhall,

I. CON-

[b] ὑπεριδὼν ὁ Θεὸς.

I. *CONSIDER the evidence we have of a judgment to come, and evince the truth and certainty of it.*

II. *PROVE, that our Lord Jesus Christ, is the person by whom GOD will judge the world.*

III. *SHEW, that in his resurrection from the dead, GOD hath given assurance unto all men, that he hath ordained him, to be the universal judge; or that the whole world shall be judged by him.*

IV. *REPRESENT to you, the force of the apostle's reasoning; and prove, that the awful consideration of a future judgment, is a powerful motive and argument, to excite all men every where to repent, and engage them to a holy life.*

AND lastly, *Close all with an application suitable to this* subject, *and the present* solemn occasion.

I. *I shall consider the evidence we have of a judgment to come, and evince the truth and certainty of it.*

THIS is evident from

Reason, and
Revelation.

REASON teacheth a *judgment to come*, and a state of *retribution* in another life.

THIS is confirmed by the *general consent* of the wisest and best of men in all ages. *Homer*, *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Cicero*, *Plutarch*, and

and almoſt all the *great names* of *antiquity* aſſerted and defended it. And even the moſt *barbarous* nations under heaven, profeſſed their belief of it. And is the *common ſuffrage* of mankind, in an affair of this nature, which ſo *nearly concerned* them, and in which their *paſſions*, *appetites*, and *worldly intereſts* could not *miſlead* them, to be wholly *diſregarded*? Muſt not this be the *voice* of *nature*, and the *plain dictate* of a *reaſoning mind*, or proceed from a *tradition* ſo *antient* and *univerſal*, as cannot be conceived, to owe its original to *blind chance*, or *vain imagination*?

BESIDES, if we conſider the *excellent powers* and *faculties*, with which GOD has indued us, whereby we are *naturally formed* for *immortality*, and cannot but *ardently aſpire* after it: or our *preſent ſtate* and *condition* in this world, is it reaſonable to think, that this life is our *final ſtate*; that we were deſigned to take a *few turns*, on this *great theatre*, to ſee a few ſcenes of *folly* and *vanity*, and then to paſs off the *ſtage*, and be no more? That *we* are to *die like the beaſts that periſh*, whom the kind author of nature hath ſo *eminently exalted* above them? *We* who are the *maſter piece* of his *workmanſhip* in this lower world, and capable of loving, ſerving, and enjoying him forever? Would not *man*, on the preſent ſuppoſition be of *all creatures moſt miſerable*, who has always ſome *deſign* or *other* in view, which he *warmly purſues*,

and yet often finds his *beſt laid ſchemes* and *projects diſappointed?* who is frequently filled with *uneaſie reflections*, and with ſuch *grievous trials* from the loſs of his *ſweeteſt comforts*, which are many times *wreſted* out of his hands, when he is ready to think he has the *faſteſt hold* of them, and which he is hardly able to *ſurvive*, but goes mourning to his grave? who is frequently *oppreſſed* and ready to be *overwelmed*, not only with the afflictions he *feels*, but even with thoſe he *fears* are coming upon him, and with the *foreboding apprehenſions* of *death* the *king of terrors*, which he *foreſeeth*, and *often anticipateth*, but is not able to *prevent?*

We are placed in a world, where little pleaſeth, but in *proſpect*, and when we have obtained, what at a *diſtant view*, we are greatly fond off, we find ourſelves diſappointed. Where pains aſſault us, deluſions ſurround us, and terrours hang over us: where *objects*, as well as *appetites* decay, and we yearly bury ſome *favorite amuſement* and *pleaſure*, and thoſe that ſucceed, are leſs *exquiſite*, and full as *mortal*. Where we ſpend much of our days, in the *vain purſuit* of happineſs, and when we have *gained* what we *wiſh* for, and dream of felicity, we are ſurprized to ſee our *graves* ſo *near* us. In a word, where the *infirmities* of our *bodies* require *one profeſſion* and the *more dangerous diſtempers* of our *minds another*. Where we

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are ſurrounded with the cries of *indigence* or *diſeaſes*. Where *youth* often *vaniſheth* like a *tempeſt-beaten flower*, and *age* ſheweth its injuries like a *blaſted oak*: where *enmity* is *ſincere*, and *friendſhip* often an *empty name*. In a world in ſhort, where the *paſt* is next to a dream, and the *future* a *ſore travel*.

Now who can think, that an infinitely *wiſe* and *good* being, would have placed us in ſuch a world as this, and endowed us, with ſuch *excellent powers* and *faculties*, and ſo *eminently diſtinguiſhed* us, from the creatures below us, and implanted in us ſo *ſtrong a deſire of immortality*, which we can no more *extinguiſh*, than we can lay aſide our *reaſon*, diveſt ourſelves of *humanity*, and ceaſe to be what God hath made us, unleſs he had deſigned us for *another* ſtate, and made *proviſion* for the *ſatisfaction* of it? would he have given us our *diſtinguiſhing faculties*, on purpoſe to make us *miſerable*, more miſerable *than the beaſts that periſh*, as muſt be the caſe, on ſuppoſition we were to *die* like them? Would not this be an *imputation* to his infinite *wiſdom* and *goodneſs*, and highly reflect on theſe *glorious attributes* and *perfections* of his nature, which *qualify* him for the *government* of the world, and *peculiarly recommend* him to the *veneration* and *eſteem*, of his *intelligent* and *reaſonable* creatures?

WE muſt then conclude, from the *nature* of man, from his *excellent powers and faculties*; from his *natural hopes* and *deſires* of *immortality*; and from his *ſtate and condition* in *this world*; that he is deſigned for *another*, and a future ſtate of *retribution*.

ESPECIALLY when we further conſider, that he is a *free* and *intelligent agent*, capable of determining his actions, and conducting them by a *law*, and conſequently capable of GOD's *moral government*, and therefore *actually ſubject* to it, and *accountable* to him for his conduct, and muſt therefore at *ſome time* or *other*, be rewarded or puniſhed by him, according to the *different nature* of his actions. Unleſs we ſuppoſe what is not to be admitted, that GOD has no regard to his own *authority*, and that he will not *vindicate* the *rights* of his *injured government*, and *maintain* the *honour* and *dignity* of his *laws*, by *rewarding* thoſe that *conſcientiouſly obſerve*, and *puniſhing* thoſe that *preſumptuouſly violate* them.

AND ſince *rewards* and *puniſhments* are not *impartially* and *equitably diſpenſed* in *this life*, as is undoubtedly evident, from the *inequalities* of preſent diſpenſations; from the *outward proſperity* of the *wicked*, and the *afflictions* of the *righteous*, who often *ſuffer* for their very *piety*, it neceſſarily follows, that there is *another life* after this, in which they *muſt be ſo*; in which GOD will maintain the

the honour of his law and government, and ſhew his *inviolable love* of *holineſs*, and his *irreconcilable hatred* of *ſin*, and *invariable will* to puniſh it, before the *whole ſyſtem* of his *rational creatures*, which do not ſufficiently appear, from the *unequal diſtribution* of *rewards* and *puniſhments* in the *preſent life*; and of this we may be as ſure, as that there is an *all-wiſe*, *righteous*, and *good being* that governs the world.

I ſhall only add under this head, that the workings of *natural conſcience*, *accuſing* or *excuſing*, *acquitting* or *condemning*, *rewarding* or *puniſhing*, according to the *different nature* of our actions, how *ſecret* ſoever; and thoſe *joys* and *ſorrows*, thoſe *hopes* and *fears*, that ſpring up in our minds, as we apprehend our actions, to be *agreeable* or *diſagreeable* to the divine will, are *plain intimations*, that we are deſigned for *another ſtate*, and that *conſcience*, which is GOD's *vicegerent* in our breaſts, and the *judge* of our actions, is alſo a *witneſs* bound over to give *evidence for*, or againſt us at a *higher tribunal*; and that we ſhall *all* be one day *acquitted* or *condemned* by the righteous judge of the world, *who is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things* [c].

UPON the whole then we ſee, that it may fairly be deduced, from the *principles* of *eternal reaſon*, that there is a *judgment to come*, or

[c] 1 John iii. 20.

or a ſtate of *retribution*, after this *ſhort*, *uncertain*, and *dying* life is at an end.

THIS may be juſtly inferred, from the *general conſent* of mankind in all ages: from the *excellent powers and faculties*, with which the kind author of nature has endowed us, whereby we become capable of a *bleſſed immortality*, and cannot but *ardently aſpire* after it: from our *afflicted ſtate and condition*, in the preſent world: from our being *free* and *intelligent agents*, capable of GOD's *moral government*, and therefore *ſubject* to it, and conſequently *accountable* to him for our conduct: from the *unequal diſtribution* of rewards and puniſhments, in the preſent life: and laſtly from the *natural workings*, and *unavoidable apprehenſions* of *conſcience*.

AND what *reaſon* teacheth, *divine revelation* confirms. Here we are taught, not only *that God will bring every work into judgment, with every ſecret thing* [d]; but acquainted with the *particular inſtances*, of the *ſolemn tranſactions* of that *important* and *deciſive day*: *and that* GOD *hath appointed a day, in the which, he will judge the world, in righteouſneſs, by that man, whom he hath ordained.*

BUT this brings me to the

II. *GENERAL head, namely to ſhew, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is conſtituted the univerſal judge of the world; or that the manage-*

[d] *Eccleſ.* xii. 19.

nagement of the whole judicial proceſs of the great day, is devolved on him, by the deſignation and appointment of the Father. As alſo the manner of his proceedings on that joyful dreadful day.

THAT there will be a day of *judgment* and *retribution*, or that all men are to be judged by GOD, and rewarded or puniſhed in another life, is the voice of *nature* and *reaſon*; but that *Chriſt* is to be *judge*, cannot be known, but by *ſupernatural revelation*; *reaſon* does not *diſcover* this, though it is *perfectly agreeable* to it.

HERE we are taught, *that the father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the* SON[e]; *and that he hath given him authority, to execute judgment alſo, becauſe he is the Son of man*[f]. *That* GOD *will judge the ſecrets of men by Jeſus Chriſt, according to his glorious goſpel*[g]. *That it is he, who is ordained of* GOD *to be the judge of quick and dead*[h]. *And that he hath appointed a day* or fixed a *certain determinate portion of time, in which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs by him. And that we muſt all appear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether good or bad*[i].

HERE

[e] *John* v. 22. [f] *John* v. 27. [g] *Rom.* ii. 16. [h] *Acts* x. 42. [i] 2 *Cor.* v. 10.

HERE we are acquainted, with the *awful preparations* for his *coming*, on that day; and with the *manner* of his *approaching* in it. *That the day of the Lord will come, as a thief in the night, in which the heavens ſhall paſs away, with a great noiſe, and the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat; that the earth alſo, and the works that are therein ſhall be burnt up* [k]. That this *great ſtage* of *action* ſhall be *broken down*, and all its *furniture* caſt into the *flames*. *That the Lord Jeſus will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire* [l]. *That he will come with power and great glory. In his own glory, and in his father's glory*; with the *whole innumerable company*, of adoring *ſaints* and *angels*, to adorn his triumphs, and to be *witneſſes*, of the *juſtice* and *equity* of his proceedings, in that *great* and *terrible day*. *That he will deſcend from heaven with a ſhout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of* GOD [m]. And that the *whole world* ſhall obey his *awful ſummons, and hear the voice of the ſon of* GOD, *and come forth* [n]; and *that the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt. For this we ſay unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord ſhall not prevent them that are aſleep, i. e.* be glorified in our bodies before them. ——*for the dead in Chriſt ſhall*

[k] 2 *Pet.* ii. 10. [l] 2 *Theſ.* i. 7.
[m] 1 *Theſ.* iv. 16. [n] *John* v. 25.

ſhall riſe firſt: then we who are alive and remain, our bodies being ſuddenly changed, *ſhall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air*, &c.[o] *Behold I ſhew you a myſtery, we ſhall not all ſleep, but we ſhall all be changed* (i. e. all the faithful who ſhall be found alive at the great day) *in a moment in the twinkling of an eye, at the laſt trump (for the trumpet ſhall ſound) and the dead ſhall be raiſed incorruptible, and we ſhall be changed*[p].

Here we are acquainted with the *whole* of his *proceedings* at that day. That the *ſecrets* of all hearts will then be diſcloſed; *that he will bring to light the hidden works of darkneſs, and make manifeſt the counſels of the heart*[q]. That *enquiry* will be made into the *merits* of every man's cauſe, and that he will call all men to a *ſtrict* and *impartial* account, what *improvement* they have made of their *reſpective talents*, which he has committed to their truſt, and paſs a *righteous* and *irreverſible* ſentence upon them. *And render to every man according to his works; to them who by patient continuance in well doing, ſeek for glory, honour, and immortality, eternal life; but indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh, upon every ſoul of man that doeth evil, without reſpect of perſons*[r].

heſſ. iv. 15, 16, 17. &c. [p] 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. [q] 1 Cor. iv. 5. Rom. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. &c.

Chriſt himſelf has given us a *lively* and *affecting deſcription* of the *preparations* for his coming, and of the *manner* of his judicial proceedings, on that day. *Matt.* xxv. 31. and following verſes. *When the ſon of man ſhall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then ſhall he ſit upon the throne of his glory; and before him ſhall be gathered all nations, and he ſhall ſeparate them one from another, as a ſhepherd divideth his ſheep from the goats: and he ſhall ſet the ſheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then ſhall the king ſay unto them on his right hand, come ye bleſſed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world; but to them on the left hand, depart from me ye curſed into everlaſting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:* both which *righteous* and *irrevocable* ſentences, will be *immediately* put in execution *for the wicked ſhall go away into everlaſting puniſhment, but the righteous into life eternal.*

Upon the whole then we ſee, that *Chriſt* is to be *judge; or that* God *will judge the world, by that man whom he hath ordained.* And by whoſe *deciſion*, ſhould we chooſe rather to *abide* than by his, who has bowels of mercy and compaſſion towards us, and ſo freely and *generouſly* ſhed his precious blood to redeem and ſave us? Than by him, who *was touched with the feeling of our infirmities*, and has ſo *tender* and *compaſſionate* a *ſenſe* of them; *and was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without*

[1] Heb. iv. 15.

without ſin'. And will make due *allowance*, for the *weakneſſes* of our nature, and has aſſured us by his holy apoſtles, *that he will judge us*, not as perſons in a ſtate of *innocence*, but as thoſe that are ſubject, through the *infirmities* of the fleſh to *manifold failings*, and paſs tho' a *righteous*, yet not a *rigorous* ſentence upon us.

But I come now to the

III. *General head, namely to prove, that in our Lord's reſurrection from the dead,* GOD *hath given aſſurance to all men, that he hath ordained him to be the judge of the world.*

Our bleſſed Lord frequently *foretold* his reſurrection from the dead, and put the *proof* of his *divine commiſſion* upon it. When the *Phariſees* required a *ſign from heaven*, of his being what he often *declared* and *proved* himſelf to be, *viz.* the *promiſed Meſſiah* the *Son of* GOD, and the *Saviour* of the *world*, he would then give them no *other ſign*, but that of his *reſurrection* from the dead. *He anſwered and ſaid unto them, when it is evening, ye ſay it will* be *fine weather; for the ſkie is red; and in the morning, it will be foul weather to day, for the ſkie is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites ye can diſcern the face of the ſkie, but cannot ye diſcern the ſigns of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation ſeeketh after a ſign, and there ſhall no ſign be given unto it, but the ſign of the prophet* Jonas; *for as* Jonas *was*

three days, and three nights, in the whale's belly, ſo ſhall the ſon of man be three days, and three nights in the heart of the earth[t]. And thus again, when the *Jews* ſaid unto him, *what ſign ſheweth thou unto us, ſeeing thou doſt theſe things?* Jeſus *anſwered and ſaid unto them, deſtroy this temple* (probably pointing to his body) *and in three days I will raiſe it up*[u].

His *reſurrection* was to all *unprejudiced* minds, a *clear demonſtration*, of his being *the Meſſiah the Son of the living* GOD. And nothing but the moſt *obſtinate prejudice*, and *envenomed malice*, could prevent their ſeeing the *force* of it. *He was declared to be the Son of* GOD *with power, according to the ſpirit of holineſs, by his reſurrection from the dead*[w]. This ſupported his *pretenſions*, and ſufficiently vindicated his *divine miſſion*, and *character*. His Father hereby *publickly declared*, the *acceptableneſs* of his *obedience unto death*, and the *perfection* of his ſacrifice; and that he was well *pleaſed* with it, and proclaimed him *king* and *judge* of the world.

And our bleſſed Lord after his reſurrection, gave a *ſpecial commiſſion* to his apoſtles to *proclaim* him under this *character*; as St. *Peter* aſſureth us, *him* GOD *raiſed up the third day, and ſhewed him openly; and he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to teſtifie, that it is he who was ordained of* GOD *to be the judge of quick and dead*[x]. He roſe the *univerſal monarch*

[t] Mat. xvi. 4. [u] Joh. ii. 19. [w] Rom. i. 4. [x] Act. x. 40. 42.

arch and *judge* of the world: and when he aſcended into heaven, he was *ſolemnly inveſted*, in the compleat exerciſe of his *kingly* and *judicial* power. In his glorious *reſurrection* and *aſcenſion* into heaven, we have a ſure *pledge* and *earneſt*, of his coming again in the quality of *univerſal judge*: *for if we believe that Jeſus died, and roſe again; even ſo them alſo that ſleep in Jeſus, will* GOD *bring with him*[1]. While the apoſtles *looked ſtedfaſtly toward heaven, as he went up, two men ſtood by them in white apparel, who alſo ſaid, ye men of* Galilee, *why ſtand ye gazing into heaven? This ſame* Jeſus, *who is taken up from you into heaven, ſhall ſo come in like manner, as ye have ſeen him go into heaven*[2].

If he who *foretold* his *reſurrection* and *aſcenſion*, into heaven, did *riſe* and *aſcend* thither, and *declare* that he would come again, to judge the world at the laſt day, and to *reward* his *faithful friends*, and to *puniſh* his *implacable enemies*, then in the *former*, we have ſufficient evidence of the *latter*, and a *firm* and *immoveable foundation* for our faith, in this *important article* of our holy religion; and may reſt ſatisfied of the truth of the apoſtle's aſſertion in the text, *that* GOD *gave aſſurance unto all men, that he will judge the world in righteouſneſs, by that man, whom he hath ordained, in that he hath raiſed him from the dead.*

I

[1] 1. Theſſ. iv. 14. [2] Act. i. 9, 10, 11.

I come now,

IV. To *repreſent to you the force of the apoſtles reaſoning, and to prove, that the aweful conſideration of a judgment to come, is a powerful motive and argument, to excite all men every where to repent, and engage them to a holy and religious life.*

This is the apoſtles argument in the text, GOD *now commandeth all men every where to repent, becauſe he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs*, &c. This important doctrine being ſet in ſo *clear* and *ſtrong* a light, in the *chriſtian revelation*, we are under *peculiar obligations*, to abandon all ſinful practices, and to betake ourſelves to a holy heavenly life.

Was there indeed no life after this, there would be *no danger*, in living as we *liſt*, and we might ſafely ſay, *let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die*[a]. Tho' even on the preſent ſuppoſition, it would be our *wiſdom*, and moſt conducive to our *rational happineſs*, to conduct ourſelves, by the *rules* and *precepts* of that *excellent religion Chriſt* has taught us. But if we are *accountable* to GOD for our conduct, and there is a *whole eternity* of the greateſt *happineſs* or *miſery* before us; and we ſhall 'ere long be adjudged to the *former* or doomed to the *latter*, *according to our works*; of what *infinite importance* is it to us, how we *behave*, during this *ſhort ſcene of action*, which will

[a] 1. Cor. xv. 32.

will ſoon be over for ever, and our everlaſting ſtates *unalterably* determin'd? *ſince we look for ſuch things, what manner of perſons, ought we to be in all holy converſation and godlineſs; looking for, and haſting to the day of* GOD, *wherein the heavens being on fire, ſhall be diſſolved, and the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat? And how diligent ſhould we be, that we may be found of him in peace, without ſpot and blameleſs*[b]?

If *eternal judgment* will not deter men from their ſins what will? The *wiſeſt* of men thought this, the moſt *powerful conſideration*, to check the *exorbitant ſallies* of *thoughtleſs* and *unguarded youth. Rejoyce, O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee, in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes*, there is a terrible ſting behind, *but know thou, that for all theſe things,* GOD *will bring thee into judgment*[c].

This conſideration had its *weight* with the great apoſtle, and powerfully excited him, to the *conſcientious diſcharge* of his duty. *I have hope*, ſays he, *toward* GOD *that there will be a reſurrection, both of the juſt, and of the unjuſt, herein do I for this cauſe do I exerciſe myſelf, to have always a conſcience void of offence towards* GOD, *and towards men*[d]. He felt the *force* of this *cogent argument*, and endeavoured to *impreſs* others, with a deep ſenſe of the *weight*

[b] 2. Pet. iii. 11. 12. [c] Eccle. xi. 9. [d] Act. xxiv. 16.

weight of it: *knowing therefore the terrour of the* Lord *we perſwade men*[*]. knowing that there will be ſuch a *terrible judgment*, we do our utmoſt to perſuade men to live accordingly. And if the ſerious conſideration, of *eternal judgment*, hath not this *happy effect* and doth not excite us to the *faithful diſcharge* of our *reſpective duties*, 'tis not poſſible *to* conceive what other *means*, ſhould be *effectual* for this purpoſe.

" Lord how aſtoniſhing is it, that a judg-
" ment to come, ſhould have ſo *little influ-*
" *ence* on thoſe that *profeſs* to *believe* it!
" That they who know, that life is ſo *ſhort*,
" and death ſo *near*, and that the conſe-
" quences of it are ſo *aweful*; and that they
" muſt ſo ſoon appear before thy *righteous*
" *tremendous tribunal*, ſhould be ſo *unmind-*
" *ful* of it, and take ſo little care to *prepare*
" for it! Bleſſed GOD! do thou enable us by
" thy grace, to think ſeriouſly of what ſo
" *infinitely* concerns us, *now* while 'tis the *ac-*
" *cepted time, and the day of ſalvation*; and
" before *the things that belong to our peace,*
" *are for ever hid from our eyes.* And may
" we break off our ſins by *repentance*, and a
" life of *ſincere obedience* and *devotedneſs* to
" thee, *becauſe thou haſt appointed a day, in*
" *the which thou wilt judge the world in righ-*
" *teouſneſs, by that man whom thou haſt ordain-*
" *ed,*

[*] 2. Cor. v. 11.

"ed, whereof thou haſt given aſſurance unto all "men in that thou haſt raiſed him from the dead."

I ſhall now make ſome *improvement* ſuitable to the *ſubject*, and the *ſolemn occaſion.*

I. *What has been ſaid of a future judgment ſhould teach us to beware of cenſuring the ways of providence, of murmuring and repining againſt* GOD, *under preſent diſpenſations, how afflictive ſoever.*

We were ſent into this world not to *enjoy*, but to *conquer* it: The preſent life is not a ſtate of *retribution* but *trial*; and therefore *there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked*[f]. The beſt of GOD's ſervants are ſometimes exerciſed with the *ſharpeſt afflictions.* GOD often *writeth bitter things againſt them*[g]: *Deep calleth unto deep, and all* GOD's *waves and billows go over them*[h]. They are frequently exerciſed, I had almoſt ſaid, with an *uninterrupted ſeries* of afflictions, and grappelling with trials and difficulties of one kind or other all their days; and they often ſuffer for their *piety.* But if there is a *judgment to come*, and a future ſtate of *retribution*, all things will be ſet right in the other world. This conſideration *brighteneth* the *darkeſt ſcenes* of providence, and ſhould reconcile good men, to thoſe diſpenſations, the pſalmiſt calls a *great deep*; and which at preſent they are not able to *fathom*[i]. And when in GOD's *light they ſhall ſee light*, all the *intricate*

 mazes

[f] Eccl. ix. 2. [g] Job. xiii. 26. [h] Pſal. xlii. 7 [i]. Pſal. xxxvi. 6.

mazes of his providence will be *unfolded*, and his *wiſdom*, *juſtice*, *equity*, *mercy*, and *faithfulneſs* will moſt illuſtriouſly appear; and their *preſent ſorrows* and *ſufferings* will enhance their *future felicity* and *glory*. Theſe *ſhades* of *night*, will *brighten* the *everlaſting day*, and give them a *double reliſh* of their happineſs for ever. *Theſe light afflictions which are but for a moment, will work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory* [k].

II. *Is there a judgment to come, what a joyful day will this be to the righteous; but what a terrible day to the wicked?*

It will be a joyful day to the righteous. They will then receive the *conſummation* of their *bliſs*, and enjoy the happineſs, which was the *object* of their *hope*, and that they *wiſhed* and *prayed* for, during the *intermediate ſtate*. Then they will obtain the *accompliſhment*, of *all* their, *hopes* and the *ſatisfaction* of *all* their *deſires*, and receive their full *recompence of reward*; and nothing will be wanting to render their happineſs *compleat* for ever. When the *laſt trump* ſhall ſound the *alarm*, *ariſe ye dead and come to judgment*, they *ſhall hear the voice of the Son of* God, with *triumphant joy and praiſe*; who will awaken their *ſleeping duſt*, and releaſe their bodies, from the *dark priſons*, in which they were ſo long *confined*, and *faſhion them*, after the *perfect model of his glorious*

[k] 2. Cor. iv. 17.

glorious body; and adjudge them to a bleſſed immortality in their *entiren ature.* And with what *pleaſing expectation*, and *tranſports of joy*, will they wait to hear that *gracious ſentence* of *abſolution* paſſed upon them *come ye bleſſed*, &c.

But it will be a terrible day to the wicked. Then their *miſery* will be *compleat*; and they will *feel* thoſe *additional torments* they *feared*, during the *whole period*, between *death* and the *final judgment*, the *ſound* of the *laſt trump* will *pierce* their ſouls, and *wound* them to the *quick:* And with what *anguiſh* and *diſtreſs*, with what *horrour* and *deſpair*, will they hear its *dreadful alarm?* And how terrified and diſmayed will they be, at the ſight of their *glorious judge*, *when he ſhall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, to take vengeance*, of all the *deſpiſers* of *goſpel grace*, and to chaſtiſe them, for their *diſobedience, ingratitude* and *folly*, in *refuſing* to *accept* of him for their *Saviour*, and *rejecting* his *offered mercy*, and *neglecting the great ſalvation*, that was *purchaſed*, and offered by him on *Goſpel terms?* and with what *reluctance* will their *wretched ſouls*, be *forced* into *thoſe bodies*, which *were the inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs unto ſin*; and in which they ſo ſhamefully *affronted* and *diſhonoured* the bleſſed GOD, and *debaſed* themſelves? and with what *terrour* and *conſternation* will they wait to hear the *dreadful ſentence* of *condemnation* pronounced upon them, *depart from me ye curſed*, &c.?

III. *Will* GOD *judge the world, by that man whom he hath ordained? how infinitely does it concern us, that we reverence the Son, and live in a chearful obedience and ſubjection to him? and how ſollicitous ſhould we be to ſecure a ſaving intereſt in him?*

Let us honour the Son, even as we honour the Father: Let us ſtoop to his *dominion* and acknowledge his *ſovereignty*, and recogniſe his right to *govern* us *at preſent*, and to *judge* us *at laſt*, by living lives of *obedience* and *ſubjection* to him; and let us be ſolicitous above all things to ſecure a *ſpecial propriety* and *intereſt* in him, *and commit the keeping of our ſouls unto him in well doing*, and endeavour to make him who is *our judge* our *friend*, and then *he will keep that which we have committed to him againſt that day.* He will be our *advocate*, and *ſollicit* and *plead* our cauſe, and *adjudge* us to a full *participation*, of the honour and happineſs of his *glorified ſtate*, when he will doom, all that would not *accept* of him for their *Saviour*, and *obey* him as their *Lord*, but ungratefully *ſlighted* and *rejected* him, and the *great ſalvation* that was *freely tendered* to them on *goſpel terms*, to *immortal flames*, and the *worm that never dies.*

IV. *From what has been ſaid of a future judgment, we may juſtly infer, the extreme folly of thoſe who are regardleſs of it, and take no care to prepare for it.*

And alas! is not this the caſe of the *gene-*

rality

rality of thoſe that *profeſs* to *believe* it? are not ſuch too *unmindfull* of it, and *remiſs* and *negligent* in their *preparations* for it? do not the *far greateſt* part of thoſe that call themſelves *chriſtians*, live at *random*, and give an *unbounded looſe* to their luſts, and ſuffer themſelves to be *hurried* through life, by the *violence* and *impetuoſity* of their *paſſions* and *appetites*, and behave as if they were never to *give an account of themſelves to* GOD, tho' they cannot but know, *that for all theſe things*, GOD *will bring them into judgment*[1], and what will be the *fatal cataſtrophe* of their miſconduct? *But is not this their way their folly*, and can there be a more *flagrant inſtance* of it? Did they frequently turn their thoughts to the other world, and look before them, to the *final iſſue* and *reſult* of things, and ſeriouſly conſider *eternal* judgment, would they not with *Felix tremble* at the thoughts of it; and could they be ſo *little* influenced by the *belief* of it?

"Lord how aſtoniſhing is it, that any "whom thou haſt endued with *reaſon*, ſhould "act ſo *contrary* to it! That they ſhould be "ſo *regardleſs* of their *actions*, who know "they are *accountable* for them, and that "theſe are the *ſeeds* and *principles* of eter-"nal *happineſs* or *miſery* in another life!"

If GOD *will judge the world in righteouſneſs*, and pronounce all men *happy* or *miſerable* for-

ever

[1] Eccl. xi. 9

ever *according to their works*, is it not our *duty*, our *wiſdom* and *intereſt*, to be often thinking of a judgment to come, and *preparing* for it in the beſt manner we can? And is not the *contrary behaviour*, a moſt *amazing inſtance* of *ſtupidity* and *folly*?

V. *Let us be humbled before* God, *that the belief of eternal judgment, has hitherto had, ſo little practical influence, on our hearts and lives.*

That *we* have been no more *careful* to *pleaſe* him, and *fearful* to *offend* him, and *ſolicitous* about our *acceptance* with him. That *we* have made no better *improvement*, of our *reſpective talents*, tho' we know, that we muſt ſhortly, *give an account of our ſtewardſhip, and be no longer ſtewards*[m], and that we ſhall be *rewarded* or *puniſhed* for ever, as we have *improved* or *miſimproved* them. That *we* have been ſo *negligent* in the diſcharge of every *branch* of our duty; and that we have ſo often *calmly* and *deliberately* ventured upon the *commiſſion* of ſin, tho' we know, what will be the *dreadful conſequences*, of the *lawleſs gratification* of our luſts.

Let ſuch of you then, as have been hitherto *regardleſs* of that *ſolemn account* you muſt ſhortly *give of yourſelves unto* God, *pray* for the influence of his *Holy Spirit*, to awaken you out of your *lethargy* and *ſecurity* in ſin, to a ſenſe of your *folly* and *danger* before it be

too

[m] Luke xvi. 2.

too late, and your caſe becomes *hopeleſs* and *deſperate* for ever; and *flee* by *repentance* and *faith*, *for refuge to lay hold on the hope which is ſet before you, even to* Jeſus, *who delivereth from the wrath to come* [n].

And let *all* of us *humble* and *abaſe* ourſelves before God, and take *ſorrow* and *ſhame* to ourſelves *proportional* to our *guilt*, that we have been *no more influenced* by the *belief* of it, and that we have not been hereby excited to greater degrees of *zeal* and *diligence* in his *ſervice*, and for the advancement of his honour and *glory*; tho' we know, what a glorious recompence of reward, he has reſerved for all his faithful ſervants; *and that our labour is not in vain in the* Lord [o].

VI. *And laſtly, let us firmly reſolve (the grace of* God *aſſiſting us) to be more mindful of death and eternal judgment, and diligent to prepare for it for the future.*

Let us watch over our *hearts* and *lives*, and be more humble and circumſpect in our walking with God. *And ſtudy to ſhew ourſelves approved unto him* [p]; *and labour, that whether preſent or abſent, we may be accepted of him* [q]. Let us be more *careful* to *improve* the *various talents* our *great Lord* and *Maſter* hath committed to our *truſt*, that when we ſhall be called to give an account of our *ſtewardſhip*, *we may do it with joy, and not with grief* [r].

Let

[n] Heb. vi. 8. 1 Theſſ. i. 10. [o] 1 Cor. xv. 56.
[p] 2 Tim. ii. 15. [q] 2 Cor. v. 9. [r] Heb. xiii. 17.

Let us deny ungodlineſs, and worldly luſts, and live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent world; looking for that bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great GOD, *and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: Who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and puriſie us unto himſelf, a peculiar people, zealous of good works* [f]. Let us live in the daily exerciſe of *repentance toward* GOD, *and faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and commit the keeping of our ſouls unto him in well doing*, as a *depoſitum* or *truſt*, into his *faithful* and *powerful hands*, and then *we ſhall have confidence and not be aſhamed before him at his coming* [t]. Then we ſhall behold that laſt *amazing joyful dreadful ſcene*, without *terrour* and *conſternation*, without *horrour* and amazement, without *anguiſh* and *deſpair*, and be *fearleſs*, amidſt *diſſolving nature*, and the *wreck* of worlds. Then the *ſound* of the *laſt trump* will be *harmonious* in our ears, and we ſhall be able to *lift up our heads*, with *joy* and *tranſport*, when an *impenitent* and *unbelieving world* ſhall in vain *cry to the rocks and mountains to fall on them*, and *cover them, from the* inſupportable *wrath of the Lamb*. Then we ſhall be found in the number of his *bleſſed retinue*, and wait with *longing expectation*, to hear that refreſhing *and* tranſporting ſentence pronounced upon us, in the face of that *univerſal* and *auguſt* aſſembly,

[f] Tit. ii. 12, 13, 14. [t] 1 John ii. 28.

bly, *come ye bleſſed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world* [a].

It may perhaps by this time be *expected*, I ſhould ſay ſomething concerning our *deceaſed friend*, who was well known to *many*, if not to *moſt*, in this *numerous aſſembly*; but here I am under *reſtraint*, by his *particular requeſt*. *High encomiums* of the *dead*, (which were never agreeable to me) are generally thought *flattery* to the *living*; and are apt *to provoke* the *unkind cenſures*, of an ill-natured world.

God was pleaſed to exerciſe him with *great trials* and *afflictions*, in the *former* part of his life, as well as in the *concluding ſcenes* of it. His laſt illneſs was *long* and *grievous*. He was many weeks exerciſed with *exquiſite pains*, and great *languiſhing* and *weakneſs*, which (I muſt do him the juſtice to ſay) he bore with *exemplary patience*, and *ſubmiſſion* to the divine Will. He ſaw death making its *gradual approaches*, and was not *terrified* and *diſmayed*, in the *nearer views* of it; but was *reſigned* to the holy will of God, *and willing to depart, and to be with Chriſt*, which in his judgment, *was far better*, and with his *laſt breath*, commended his *departing ſoul, into the hands of his merciful Redeemer* and *Saviour*, in the words *of dying Stephen, Lord Chriſt receive my ſpirit* [b]. He extended his thoughts to the *judgment of the great day*, the belief of

[a] Mat. xxv. 34. [b] Acts vii. 59.

which had made *deep* and *laſting impreſſions* on *his mind*, and he was *deſirous* (it ſeems) it ſhould make the *like impreſſion* on *yours*; but he conſidered the *particular judgment* as *near*, *and that it is appointed unto all men once to die, but after this the judgment*[x]. *That the judge ſtands at the door*[y]; and therefore it was his *requeſt*, that I would put you in mind, of the *infinite importance*, of *dying* out of this world; and exhort and urge you, to make a *ſpeedy preparation* for *death*, and *eternal judgment*, which immediately ſucceeds it.

And will you not hear him, *who being dead, yet is* now thus *ſpeaking to you?* will you not hearken to the voice of your *conſciences*, and attend to the *language*, and *loud calls* of *providence*, in the *frequent inſtances* of mortality that are before your eyes, to prepare for your *approaching change*, and *appearance* before the *awful bar* of GOD, when you cannot but be ſenſible, that it is *near*; and how *infinitely* it concerns you, to be always *ready* for the *coming of the Lord*, and to attend the *awful ſummons to go out to meet him? Eſpecially when you know, neither the day nor the hour, wherein the ſon of man cometh:* And *to ſtand with your loins girt about, and your lights burning, and to be as men, that wait for the coming of their Lord, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately; becauſe bleſſed are thoſe ſervants, whom their Lord when he cometh*

[x] Heb. ix. 27. [y] James v. 9.

cometh ſhall find watching[z]; in a poſture of *readineſs* to receive him; in a *prepared ſtate* and *frame*; and dreadful beyond *expreſſion* or *thought*, will be the condition of all thoſe, who are *fatally ſurprized* by death, and ſummoned to judgment, before they have made the *neceſſary preparations* for it.

He deſired alſo, that I would remind you, of the abſolute neceſſity, and infinite importance, of your being intereſted in the meritorious righteouſneſs, and prevailing interceſſion of the Lord Jeſus, in order to your being acquitted and accepted, at the righteous tribunal of GOD.

Alas! our *obedience* is very *imperfect*, and will not ſtand the teſt, of the *ſtrict examination* of our own *conſciences*, much leſs the *ſevere ſcrutiny*, of that infinitely holy and jealous GOD, *with whom we have to do*[a]: and therefore we muſt *build our hopes* of mercy, *acceptance*, and *ſalvation*, on the *merits* of Chriſt's *death*, and *interceſſion* in the virtue of it, and ſay with the apoſtles, *and be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of* GOD *by faith*[b]. To his *meritorious ſacrifice*, and *interceſſion*, we are indebted for the *acceptableneſs* of our *repentance*, and *beſt obedience*, and of all our *religious ſervices*: And without a regular *truſt* and *dependence* on the *merits* and *mediation of the great high prieſt of*

[z] Luke xii. 35, 36, 37. [a] Heb. iv. 13. [b] Philip. iii. 9.

our profeſſion, our hopes of *acceptance* and *eternal life* are *ill founded*, and will *betray* us at laſt, and *diſappoint* us for ever; and we can never warrantably hope, *to find mercy of the Lord at that day*[c]. Chriſt is emphatically ſtiled, *The* LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS[d]. He was *to finiſh the tranſgreſſion, and to make an end of ſins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlaſting righteouſneſs*[e]. *He is made of* GOD to all that *unfeignedly believe in him, righteouſneſs* or *juſtification*[f]. And GOD *hath ſet him forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins, that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus*[g]. And without a *ſpecial intereſt*, in the merit of his *blood* and *interceſſion*, and a *humble reliance* upon it, *apoſtate creatures*, can have no *well grounded* hopes of the *divine mercy*; of ſtanding the *impartial trial*, of the *great* and *terrible day of the Lord*, and coming off, with *applauſe* and *triumph*. All other *methods* of *acceptance* and *ſalvation* are *vain* and *ineffectual*; *for other foundation, can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt*[h]. *There is ſalvation in no other; for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we muſt be ſaved*[i].

And finally it was his deſire, that I would direct

[c] 2 Tim. i. 10. [d] Jer. xxiii. 6. [e] Dan ix. 24.
[f] 1 Cor. i. 30. [g] Rom. iii. 25. [h] 1 Cor. iii. 11.
[i] Acts iv. 12.

rect you, how ſinners may obtain, a ſaving intereſt in Chriſt, and the great ſalvation that is purchaſed and offered by him.

In order to this, an *unfeigned* conſent to the *gracious terms* of the *goſpel covenant, founded* in his moſt *precious blood*, is *abſolutely neceſſary*, which *are repentance towards* GOD, *and faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Or a *cordial acceptance* of him for our *Saviour*, in all his *mediatorial offices*, and for the *great ends* and *purpoſes* of his *mediation.* For our *prophet*, ſo as to *hearken* to his *inſtructions*, and follow that *bleſſed example* of *univerſal goodneſs* he has ſet us. For our *prieſt*, ſo as to *truſt* in his *ſacrifice* and *interceſſion*, for *mercy* and *ſalvation.* And for our *KING* and *LORD*, ſo as to *obey* him *ſincerely* in the courſe of our life, and without *limitation* and *reſerve*; and to *be thus looking for the mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, unto eternal life.* And then, we ſhall be, of the happy number of thoſe, *who are Chriſt's at his coming* [k]; And ſhall be *found unto praiſe and honour and glory; when he ſhall come to be glorified in his ſaints, and be admired in all them that believe in that day* [l]; and ſhall ſhare, in the *joy* and *triumph* of it: *and be preſented faultleſs, before the preſence of his glory, with exceeding joy* [m].

To conclude, let thoſe of you, who have loſt ſo *agreeable* and *deſirable* a relative, *hear the rod, and who hath appointed it* [n]; and com-

[k] 1 Cor. xv. 23. [l] 2 Theſ. i. 10. [m] Jude 24. [n] Mic. vi. 9.

comport with the *language*, and *merciful deſign*, of this *ſolemn providence*. Beware of *murmuring* and *repining* againſt GOD, *and charging him fooliſhly*; but ſay in the language of *ſubmiſſion*, *it is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good*[o]. *Shall we receive good at the hand of* GOD, *and ſhall we not receive evil*[p]? *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and bleſſed be the name of the Lord*[q]. Let the *death* of one ſo *near* and *dear* to you remind you of your *own*, and quicken you in your preparations for it: Prepare to follow him to that bleſſed world, to which you *hope* he is gone, and where you *hope* to meet again, never to part more. Remember *that being dead he is yet ſpeaking to you*, in the language of the text: And may the *Father of mercies, and the* GOD *of all conſolation, who comforteth thoſe that are caſt down*, ſupport and comfort *you*[r].

And may all of us, by the *frequent inſtances* of the *frailty* and *uncertainty* of our lives, learn to *die*, and be hereby *excited* to prepare for ſo *important a change* and for our *appearance* before the awful bar of GOD. And then *death* will be to us, *the gate of life*, and a ſafe *paſſage* to the regions of *bliſs* and *immortality*; where *ſin*, and *ſorrow* and *death*, ſhall be no more, where perfect *reſt*, and *peace*, and *joy* for ever dwell; where this *laſt* and *formidable enemy* to nature, *ſhall be deſtroyed*,

[o] 1 Sam. iii. 18 [p] Job ii. 10. [q] Job i. 21. [r] 2 Cor. vii. 6.

ed, and ſwallowed up in life and *victory*; Where GOD will baniſh all ſorrow from our hearts, *and for ever wipe away all tears from our eyes, and make us drink of the river of his pleaſures*[s]: *In whoſe preſence there is fulneſs of joy; and at whoſe right hand, there are pleaſures for ever more*[t].

Now may our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and GOD *even our Father, who hath loved us, and given us everlaſting conſolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and ſtabliſh you in every good word and work*[u]. *To him be glory in the church by Chriſt Jeſus, throughout all ages, world without end*[w], Amen.

[s] Pſa. xxxvi. 8. [t] Pſa. xvi. 11. [u] 2 Theſ. ii. 16, 17. [w] Eph. iii. 21.

THE deceaſed, being greatly affected with the late excellent Dr. *Watts's* verſion of the xvii. pſalm; and deriving much comfort from it, in the laſt ſcenes of his life, it was deſired that this might be ſung after Sermon, at his funeral, and inſerted here.

I.

LORD, I am thine: But thou wilt prove
My Faith, my Patience, and my Love:
When Men of ſpite againſt me joyn,
They are the Sword, the Hand is thine.

II.

II.

Their Hope and Portion lies below;
'Tis all the Happineſs they know,
'Tis all they ſeek; they take their ſhares,
And leave the reſt among their Heirs.

III.

What Sinners value I reſign;
Lord, 'tis enough that thou art mine;
I ſhall behold thy bliſsful Face,
And ſtand compleat in Righteouſneſs.

IV.

This Life's a Dream, an empty ſhow;
But the bright World, to which I go,
Hath Joys ſubſtantial and ſincere;
When ſhall I wake, and find me there?

V.

O glorious Hour! O bleſt abode!
I ſhall be near and like my God!
And Fleſh and ſin no more controul
The Sacred Pleaſures of the Soul.

VI.

My Fleſh ſhall ſlumber in the Ground,
Till the laſt Trumpet's joyful ſound;
Then burſt the Chains with ſweet ſurprize,
And in my Saviour's Image riſe.

FINIS.

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